

March 2017

£2 No. 396

Mascot

The Magazine of the Midget & Sprite Club



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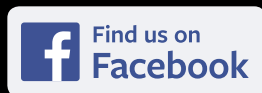
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Classic Car



Modern Car



Classic Bike



Multi-vehicle



Military



THE WHO, THE WHAT & THE WHERE of THE MIDGET & SPRITE CLUB

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Also see the Club Nights section for new areas and contacts.

Compiled by Gary Lazarus (editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk). Please advise me of any changes, errors etc.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL: IF YOU EXPERIENCE 'MASCOT' PROBLEMS UPON RENEWAL, PLEASE CONTACT THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY OR THE TREASURER STRAIGHT AWAY. The Committee

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March Editorial



Putting 17 litres of V-Power Nitro+ Diesel in your Spridget is a really bad idea. More of that next month!

Trust – it's no small thing!

February has been a busy one for me, not only because it's a short month, so less days to put *Mascot* together but also because every weekend has been a busy one including at least one day driving from London to the Midlands and back over the last three weekends. Twice to Stoneleigh, once for the Triumph and MG Spares Day, then the following weekend at Race Retro also held at Stoneleigh. Finally, to Redditch and back for the most recent MASC Committee meeting. Every Sunday back and forth up the M40!

The Triumph and MG Spares Day was very interesting, not only from the perspective of the large amount of parts available and the numerous trade and private dealers selling their wares, but by the fact that it highlighted in general that classic car people seem to be a trusting and trustworthy bunch. I have two examples of this behaviour.

On previous years there had always been a cash-point machine situated somewhere at the event. But for some reason (probably the expense), the organisers have decided to dispense (pun intended) with this facility. Quite a strange decision in my opinion, as many visitor's may have found parts that they didn't know that they wanted, only to find that there was no facility to get extra cash on the day.

I found myself in this situation, having come across some great parts for Gapless' drum to disk brake conversion at the upcoming Practical Classics Restoration Show at the NEC on the weekend of 31 March to 2nd April.

The first example of trust was a chap selling a pair of new old stock Midget disk brake callipers. Not having the part number, I could only trust that they were what he said they were. More trusting though was the fact that having already spent quite a bit on other stalls, I didn't have the cash on me to pay for them. "No problem" he said. "Post me a cheque when you get home". We'd never met before but here he trusted me to send the money. On another stand Club member and purveyor of Midget & Sprite Parts Richard Woolley, had the two bottom wishbones that I needed. No problem once again, he happily let me take them home, trusting that I'd transfer the money into his bank account later. Obviously I did.

I've seen many other similar examples of this, from people lending anything from tools, right through to cars! With the only thing linking us together being a mutual love of our hobby. I found the experience quite uplifting.

This month looks like it's going to be just as busy doing nice and exciting Spridgety things and I trust that you all have a great month too.

Gary,
"Gaps" & "Gapless"

The deadline for articles and reports to be included in April's edition of *Mascot* is Monday 20th of March.

The statements and opinions expressed in each and every issue of *Mascot* are not necessarily the considered views of the Midget and Sprite Club. The views expressed by the editorial contributors, letter writers and advertisers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the view of the Club. The Midget and Sprite Club accepts no responsibility for the results of following contributor's advice, nor does it necessarily endorse the services or products offered by advertisers.



HOLIDAY GITES

Bargain Deal on Gîtes for MASC Members Traveling to France in 2017

Offered by MASC member Norman Verona

Members Lynne & Norman Verona live in the Loire Valley on the border with Brittany. They have 2 gîtes which they will let to MASC members for the cost price of **£120** per week. (**£140** pw for bookings made after 31/3)

The details are at www.frenchblat.com/MG-clubs.htm

We no longer run the gîtes on a commercial basis but feel they could once again be of use to club members. For the budding astronomers among you, we also now have an 8" telescope.

The gîtes sleep two each and have bedding and towels, tea, coffee and toilet rolls and soap.

Look forward to seeing some members over the summer.

Email Norman@frenchblat.com with your bookings or questions.

www.frenchblat.com/MG-clubs.htm

Norman Verona
Member Number 4121, La Foie, 49520,
Noellet, France
France Mobile 0033(0)7 70 70 23 79
Home: 0033(0) 2 41 92 73 44



Club Nights


- 1st Saturday **Yorkshire Area** – Meet each month at lunchtime from 12:30pm at **The Nags Head**, Pickhill, near Thirsk, YO7 4JG – more information at <http://yorkshiremasc.blogspot.com/>
- 1st Tuesday **Essex Area** – Now meet at **The Green Man**, Green Man Lane, Kelvedon Road, Little Braxted, Essex CM8 3LB. For further details contact Gary Knight, Tel: 01376 562172 Mob: 07932 077305 email: gknights@live.co.uk
- 1st Wednesday **Central Area** – Now meet at the **Swan Inn**, Whitacre Heath, Near Coleshill, B46 2JA, 8.30 pm onwards Contact: Dave Warren, Tel: 07831 101850. email: central.masc@live.com
- 1st Wednesday **Oxford Area** – Meet at the **Blackhorse Pub**, Gozzards Ford, Nr Abingdon. 7pm for those eating or 8pm for those not. Contact Grahame Gibbins at grahame_gibbins@hotmail.com
- 2nd Tuesday **London Area** (Congestion Zone) – Meet at **The Ace Cafe** at 7:30pm together with the Classic Cars Magazine night. Details: Gary Lazarus on 020 7700 5696 garyfrogeye@gmail
- 2nd Wednesday **Devon Area** – Meet at **Court Farm**, Abbotskerswell, TQ125 NY Devon. Michael Ellis Michael_Ellis@live.co.uk and telephone: 0527 598091
- 2nd Wednesday **Heart of England** – all welcome at the **Green Dragon**, Sambourne, Redditch B96 6NU for 8.30 start. To check “what’s on” please email Steve Newton on newton-gemini@sky.com
- 2nd Wednesday **North West Area** – Meet at **The Kilton**, turn off M6 at Jct 20 onto A50 towards Macclesfield. Pub 4 miles on left. Please note new venue. Neil McLeod email neil_mcleod2@outlook.com Tel 01772 323770 Mobile 07921 089 68
- 2nd Wednesday **Bristol Area** will meet at **Wishing Well**, Wapley Road, Codrington, Bristol BS37 6RY. From 8.00pm – or earlier for a Curry enjoyed in peace! Contact Terry Horler 01454 881770 rebelwithasprite@hotmail.com
- 2nd Thursday **Notts/Derby border Area** at the **Sitwell Arms** at 30 Wood Lane, Horsley Woodhouse, Derby, DE7 6BN from 7.30. Just a mile north-west of the A608/A609 crossroads. Ian Cooke 0115 938 3838 ilcooke@btinternet.com
- 2nd Thursday **East Anglian Area**. Previously the Cambridgeshire Area meet at **The Ferry Boat**, at Holywell, 8pm
- 2nd Sunday *New* **East Kent Group** – Meet at the **Crown Inn**, Sarre, CT7 0LF from 1230hrs Contact alan.anstead@btopenworld.com
- 3rd Tuesday **Scotland** – Meet at **The Windmill Tavern**, 4 Thorniewood Road, Uddingston G71 5QQ at 8pm. Graham Smith 0141 954 8276 email: smith.grahamf@yahoo.com
- 3rd Tuesday **Surrey** – Meet at **The Chequers**, Chequers Lane, Walton-on-the-Hill, Surrey KT20 7SF. 7.00pm onwards. Contact Mike Gorman, gorman698@btinternet.com Tel: 01737 552256
- 3rd Sunday *New* **North Notts & South Yorks** group meeting is from 10am. **The Courtyard Tea Room**, Womersley, north of Doncaster DN6 9BH. Contact: John Austerfield austerfield.07@btinternet.com 07778 636070
- 4th Monday **Dorset** – **NEW VENUE The Worlds End**, Almer, Nr. Blandford, Dorset, DT11 9EW – 7:30. Contact John Gully. Tel: 07876 334 949 email: john.gully@btinternet.com
- 4th Thursday **Sussex** – Meet at **Bolney Stage**, Bolney, RH17 5RL from 19:00.
- 4th Thursday **Hampshire** – Meets at **The Golden Pot**, Old Odiham Road, Shalden, Alton, Hampshire, GU34 4DJ. Please ring Terry or Harriet Langridge on 01252 626063 for details.
- 4th Sunday **Kent Area** – Back at **The Angel**, Addington Green, Kent until further notice. Contact Alan Anstead enquiries@midgetandspriteclub.com
- Last Monday **Wiltshire** – Meet at **The Barge Inn**, Seend, Nr. Devizes, about 7pm. Contact Andy Cross on 01225 743554 or email andy@cross743.freemove.co.uk
- Last Wednesday **Home Counties North West** for members in Herts, Beds, Bucks, Berks, N. London or anyone interested! Meet at the **Chequers Inn**, Redbourn, AL3 7AD from 6:30pm. Please contact Mike or Sue Gahan on email mike@mgahan.demon.co.uk or on 07850 488636.
- Last Thursday. **Somerset Area** – Meet at **Windy Miller’s Pie & Bar House @** Haselbury Mill, nr. Crewkerne. TA18 7NY 7pm if eating, 8 to 8.30pm if not. Please contact Valerie Young on 01460 391431 for further information. We may not always be there, especially in the Summer!
- Northern Ireland robertholmes25@hotmail.com. If enough interest, will arrange a meeting.
- South West Wales Non-regular and occasional meetings and runs arranged throughout the summer months. Please contact David Hill on 01239 811307 or email: david@hill.be



Club Website

www.midgetandspriteclub.co.uk

Members Only Pages: Password: *Dipstick* (which is case sensitive)

Also follow the Midget and Sprite Club on  Find us on: [facebook.](#)

The "Midget and Sprite Club (MASC) Facebook page has 503 members as of 5th December

Area reps please make Gary Lazarus aware of any events already in your diaries and any that are planned for 2017 so that they can be added to this section of the magazine and the website.

For the magazine Gary can be contacted at editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk

For the website Mike Bennett can be contacted at webmaster@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk

31st Mar – 2nd Apr **Practical Classics Restoration Show.** Contact Alan Pritchett for details a.pritchett@btinternet.com



9th April 2017 **'Cote de Kent' Run** starting at Faversham & following the coast finishing for lunch at The Crown, Sarre. Contact Kent rep for details
23rd April. Sunday Drive it Day, The route is currently being worked out, but the plan is to meet at 9am at Morrisons supermarket, Gamston (on A52 south-east of Nottingham) for a run to a final destination at a private classic car museum where we will join fellow MASC members from other areas. Contact Notts + Derby area rep. Ian Cooke ilcooke@btinternet.com

23rd Apr **"Drive it Day"** Check with your area rep for details of local events

28th, 29th, 30th Apr **Donington Historic Festival** at Donington Park. Richard Wharmby r.wharmby10@virginmedia.com



30th Apr – 1st May **Stratford Festival of Motoring**

4th June **Sunday Wollaton Park Autokarna** To book a place in the MASC paddock area – contact Notts + Derby area rep. Ian Cooke ilcooke@btinternet.com and see www.pwa7c.co.uk/eventsautokarna.php

15th – 18th June **Treffen trip** to Germany (Now Fully Sold Out) Geoff Hunter ogleman5@gmail.com

1st & 2nd July **Flywheel at Bicester Heritage**, Bicester, Oxon. Enquiries. flywheelfestival.com. Contact Somerset Area Rep for details

22nd – 23rd July **Classic Nostalgia**, Shelsley Walsh

28th – 30th July **Silverstone Classic** Join the MASC club stand

19th-25th July **Historic GP Le Puy de Notre Dame** (allow 2 days either side for a Tour). Contact Alan Anstead for details enquiries@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk



1st – 10th Sept **6th Miglia Tour.** Contact Alan Anstead for details enquiries@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk

23rd – 24th Sept **Pistons and Props** Sywell

10th – 12th Nov **Classic Motor Show.** NEC

Send your events details to editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk

Gary, I was interested to read your editorial in February's issue of your different attitude to "Gapless" over "Gaps". My Midget is used all year round, although I try not to use it in really inclement weather, and never on salty roads.

I was well into an active retirement, and when my wife retired a couple of years ago, I didn't think it worth having three cars cluttering up the place, and foolishly sold one of our moderns.

I did not realise that shopping, meeting friends for coffee, volunteering, Grandma duties, etc would mean I actually see less of the modern car than before!

So the Midget gets regular use, and because it is tax exempt and cheap to insure, I am not tempted to buy another modern. Midgets aren't much good for transporting bulky goods back from B&Q though!

Dear Stuart and Gary,

I have just joined your great Club and unfortunately was not organised enough to send a photo of my new acquisition in time for your February Edition of *Mascot*. I owned a 1969 Midget 35 years ago which I converted into an Arkley SS. Unfortunately it had to go when children came along but now I am reliving a dream and have just purchased a 1968 Austin Healey Sprite. After a bit of detective work I have tracked down the person who owned it back in the late 80s/90s and who was responsible for completely rebuilding her. Not only did I have a fascinating telephone conversation with him, but a week later he sent me a 5 page account with photos of the rebuilding project. It only goes to show what a very special breed of person your average Spridget owner is! Needless to say this fascinating account has joined the cars history file for the interest of generations to come.

Keep up the good work. Best wishes

James Mavor

Where is it now?

Dear Mr Horler,


I was given your contact details at the NEC classic car show a couple of years ago. The attached photo shows me as a small boy cleaning my father's Frogeye Sprite (505WMP). The car was sold in Wales approximately thirty five years ago (estimated). Dad met my mother while driving the car and he even cut a boot lid into the back of it to fit my pram. Hopefully if the car still exists, this has been returned to the original. The colour would have been bright orange (originally dark blue), and it had the original steel wheels with missing hubcaps. Please could you let me know if the car still exists on your records, and whether it has been used as a donor for other cars. Thank you in advance.



Mike Sutton

P.S. I have fond memories of the car, and still like to see them at classic meetings.






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For some it's the iconic status...



For others it's the marque...

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*All bookings are subject to a single transaction fee. All information correct at time of publishing. Calls cost 13p per minute plus network extras. See website for all information. Tickets include a show guide worth £4.00. **Club ticket (adult 16 years+) offer only applies to Saturday and Sunday and only when booked in advance. Club single ticket offer is limited to four tickets per member and the club family ticket offer is limited to one family ticket per member. A family ticket admits 2 adults and up to 3 children (5-15 years). Hand in your ticket stub or print-at-home voucher to your club's stand and they will benefit from a commission.



Alan Anstead and John Clark at work during last year's show.

Practical Classics Classic Car & Restoration Show 2017

31st March to 2nd April, NEC Birmingham, Hall 12 Stand 325

The show draws ever closer and worry begins! We will be showing five cars at this show and one of the cars belongs to our ever efficient Editor, Gary Lazarus. Somehow Gary has managed to persuade Alan Anstead and John Clark to convert his new Frogeye from drum brakes to disc brakes at the show. I have not enquired too closely about how this has come about but I hope the rumour concerning dodgy past favours is not true.

Anyway, Alan and John seem to be quite happy to be getting their hands dirty again, but this also may be down to not having to make the tea and coffee!

We will again be offering our for sale/wants board, so if you have any parts you want to move on or need that vital part to complete the ongoing project, please come and make use of it.

As is now normal at these shows, the organisers are offering a £1 commission for every advance ticket bought, so long as it contains the word 'Club', so if you are visiting the show please call in and leave the stub with us. At the classic Car show in November last year we managed to collect the grand total of 40, so it is worth the effort. And don't forget, tickets can be bought in advance using the discount codes, **PCRS17S** for single tickets at £14.50 and **PCRS17CF** for family tickets at £30, for Saturday and Sunday. Please see the advert elsewhere in the magazine. I hope to see you there.

Alan Pritchett



The MASC team after winning the 'Best Stand and Car Display' award at last year's show

New Members Jan

We extend a warm welcome to the following new and rejoined members

5380	Anthony Cook	West Sussex	Sprite	Mk 3
5381	Nick Fussell	Bristol	Sprite	Mk 2
5382	John Hamerton	Sheffield	Midget	1500
5383	James Best	Oxfordshire	Sprite	Mk 1
5384	Steuart Crofts	Kent	Midget	Mk 3 RWA
5385	Guy Elkin	West Midlands	Midget	Mk 3
5386	Joe Bowen	Bedfordshire	Midget	Mk 3
5386	Keith Pickering	West Midlands	Sprite	
5388	Harry Barber	West Midlands	Midget	
5389	Malcolm Le Chevalier	Gloucestershire	Midget	1500
5390	Kevin Fuller	Suffolk	Midget	
5391	Mike Crossen	Hampshire	Sprite	Mk 1
5392	Mark Williams	Essex	Sprite	Mk 1
5393	Mr & Mrs Thomas	Pembrokeshire	Sprite	Mk 1
5395	Mike & Rebecca Dunnaway	Gloucestershire	Midget	Mk 3 RWA
5396	Mark Smith	Worcestershire	Midget	1500

David Mears' MkII Sprite



*Malcolm Le Chevalier's
de-bumpered Midget
1500*

2016 – Feb 2017



Gary Dines' 1963 mk2 Sprite as found after being parked in 1979



And after Gary and his father restored it between June 2013 - April 2014



Keith Smith in his Mk1 Sprite which he's owned for 20 years



Tony's latest Spridget acquisition, a yellow 1965 AH Sprite was purchased in 2014.



James Best's Mk1 Sprite



Joe Bowen in his Midget at Spa in 2016"



Mike Crossen's Frogeye

Malcom with his wife Kate and the Sprite



Keith Pickering's Sprite



Rejoined member Andrew Parrott's
RWA Midget 'Mungo'

Keri Thomas in his Frogeye, currently
under restoration



Mike Dunnaway in his and
Rebecca's MkIII RWA Midget





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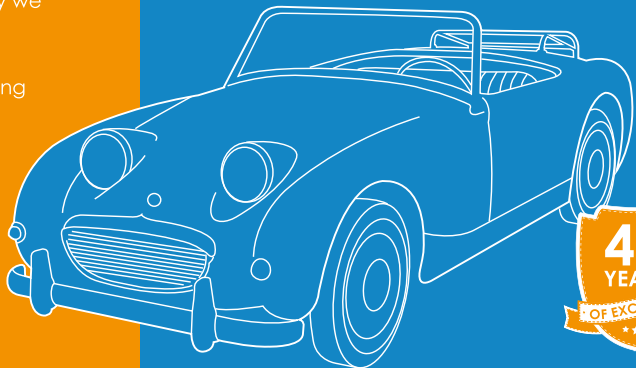
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For those of you who have an earlier engine in your Spridget, you'll also have two side tappet chest covers. These removable covers enabled a convenient means of camshaft change without the need to take the engine out of the car, by providing easy access to the tappet blocks. Whilst not a procedure you'd regularly undertake, a characteristic of these covers is that they can easily become a source of oil leaks if they are not carefully positioned, sealed and tightened. One of the main failings in design is that there is just one central bolt to hold each plate in position, therefore the plate can easily rotate if it is disturbed.

We will have to presume the original covers were the same as those used for the A35, while publications for our derivatives such as Terry Horler's Original Sprite and Midget (ISBN 0-7603-1449-7) identify changes to the profile of these covers and gaskets over a number of years, from the earliest 9C (948cc) engines through to the last of the 10CC (1098cc) engines, in an attempt to keep the oil in the block. As the engine was developed the changes are recorded in Original Sprite and Midget as follows:

MKII Sprite & MK I MG (page 73)

10CG 6868 (Mar '63)

Improved front & rear tappet chest covers to counter leakage problem.

This implies the engines were originally introduced with a design (the same covers as the A35) which proved inadequate and needed changing during production of the squarer bodied marques in 1963.

MKIII Sprite & MK II MG (page 85)

H37548, L25600 (Nov '65)

Gaskets changed for front and rear tappet chest covers. Improved rear cover introduced.

The changes in 1965 for the MKIII Sprite & MKII Midget suggest that not only were the gaskets not as effective as they should be, but that the rear cover required yet another change in profile to halt the flow of oil. This tells us there were a number of designs for

the rear cover since the introduction of the MKI Sprite.

Interestingly, the original parts catalogues provide an array of part numbers for front and rear covers over this period. For the 9C, 9CG and 10CG engines which had a vent pipe on the front cover, there are 5 numbers listed for the front, and 4 for the rear cover. The part numbers for the 10CC engine is also quite broad; there are 3 different numbers recorded for each cover. These multiple options can make it difficult to identify exactly which type was specific to a particular engine, unfortunately the illustrations in the parts catalogues do not provide enough detail to be conclusive.

Of course now only aftermarket covers are available and these are it seems, of a later design as they were considered more effective. *Figure 1* shows the profile of two covers; the front cover is an earlier design which utilises a thinner cork gasket, while the rear cover has the later designed deep pressed (concave) profile, this has



Chest Covers



a lipped edge which accommodates a much thicker rubber seal. Figures 2 & 3 illustrate in more detail the profile of these two covers and their seals. An additional problem with aftermarket covers with a “one-piece” canister is that this canister may well be incorrectly angled relative to the radiator neck. Figure 4 illustrates the original canister angulation on top and the aftermarket canister below. This angle becomes critical as the hose, on its way down from the closed circuit control valve to the canister, will be obstructed by the radiator neck. Figure 5 shows how close this relationship is even with an original “3 section” canister and correctly profiled hose.

Irrespective of the type of cover you may have, achieving a satisfactory seal can be a difficult task. Firstly, with respect to access, the manifolds and carburetors obscure your view and make it virtually



impossible to see what you’re doing. And to remove or install the covers they are, though not impossible, difficult to get at. The best solution is to move the manifolds completely out of the way to provide easier access. Secondly, if you have a canister on the front chest cover then this may be more likely to leak as it is easy to disturb whenever you remove or refit the hose.

My copy of the BL workshop manual doesn’t provide a torque setting for the bolts which hold the covers in place, Haynes however, does. It specifies 5 Ft-lbs for the deep pressed cover and 2 Ft-lbs for the earlier shallow pressed design. These forces are incredibly light compared to the majority of fixings on our cars, and with a leaky side plate there is always the temptation to tighten, and then over tighten the bolts in an attempt to eliminate a leak.

If you have a cover which leaks and requires attention or if you need to remove the cover for any other reason (changing your camshaft?) then there are a few points

worth considering to minimise the chance of failure when reinstalling the covers.

First, it's important to check the cover for distortion. Previous over tightening of the bolt when trying to eliminate a leak is likely to result in the cover becoming distorted. Checking for distortion is easier said than done as the profiled recess for the gasket prevents the cover being assessed on any flat surface, in fact the best place to check it is back on the engine but without the gasket. Hold it in place and try to wobble the cover; this would indicate that it's warped. Use a thin feeler gauge around the edge of the cover to see if you can identify where gaps might exist, if you can then that's where your leak is coming from. You can check each side of the gasket mating surface around the cover with a straight edge as this will highlight any localised anomalies.

A persistent leak on my front cover was the result of a deformed lower edge, which I then persuaded back in to place as best I could. Check again on the engine to ensure the entire surface is stable and that it sits on one plane.

When it comes to re-assembly, I'm aware of two options that might help minimise leakage. The first option describes a method for the earlier cork gasket profile covers. I found this on the internet, the author is Mr Stephen Strange, dates from 2012 and is described as follows:

Here, the chest cover itself is coated with a thin layer of Permatex Ultra Black RTV Gasket Maker. This can withstand temperatures of 2600C and is considered to be one of the best sealants as oil will not contaminate it. This is left to cure prior to trimming any excess back with a sharp knife.

To fit the cover in place, use Permatex Aviation Form-A-Gasket or Hi-Tack to hold it in position. It's noted that new rubber O rings should always be used, and tighten the bolts up to the previously specified 2 Ft-lbs, or 5 Ft-lbs for the deep pressed lipped profile, bearing in mind that above these values both damage to the gaskets and distortion of the covers may occur.

Option 2, is advocated by our clubs very own Alan Anstead for the later deep pressed lipped, rubber gasket covers and is as follows:

The rubber gaskets supplied are often a poor fit on the tappet chest cover. Trim the gasket till it lays flat upon the cover and then apply Hylomar to both gasket surfaces. Do not overtighten the securing bolt which will benefit from a fibre washer with an application of Hylomar. With the bolts use a split washer over a steel washer over a fibre washer, again using Hylomar on the fibre washer sides and bore.

An alternative to Hylomar could be WellSeal as this has proved itself over many years across a number of applications.

When it came to my earlier cork gasket type cover with canister, I chose a slightly different route by applying a layer of Hylomar to both sides of the cork gasket then carefully securing it in place, trying not to overtighten. On start up the joint appeared to be doing its job, after a 50 mile jaunt I examined the seal around the cover and I'm glad to report there has been no leakage at all. I do not now intend to disturb the cover – ever.

As many of you know, for the introduction of the Sprite MKIV and Midget MKIII in 1967 with its 1275cc power unit, the engine block was reviewed and changes made, one of the more obvious modifications was the absence of the removable chest covers. These were eliminated to help strengthen the casting with its increased power output, and perhaps it was recognised that the camshaft was not an item frequently changed, and this perceived advantage was far outweighed by the elimination of a perpetual oil leak.

My thanks to Alan Anstead, John Davies, Andy Cross and Terry Horler for their advice and help with the development of this article.

Philip Sellen 1153

Representing the Area Representatives

Were you aware that as a MASC member you could get a 7.5% discount at parts supplier Ahead-4-Healey. I wasn't until last week.



I confirmed the information and have set up a system with MASC Membership Secretary Stuart Watson so that members seeking the discount can have their bona-fides checked at time of purchase. You will require to state your MASC membership number for the purpose of obtaining the discount.

I have also obtained for members a 5% discount at Minispares, London. Well known in mini circles, and used by several well known engine builders / tuners such as A.C.Dodd, CalverST & Bill Richards, the company supply engine parts and ancillaries for BMC & BLMC mini transverse engines that are compatible with A-Series MG Midget & AH Sprite inline engines. Again a system is in place, thanks to the assistance of MASC Membership Secretary Stuart Watson, so that members seeking the discount can have their bona-fides checked at the time of purchase. Once again you will have to state your MASC membership number for the purpose of obtaining the discount.

As well as representing the Area Representatives if any member has an issue that they would like placed before the National Committee then contact me via enquiries@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk

No-one so far has stepped forward to fill the position of Mascot Editor. The months are slowly ticking away till our current long standing Editor Gary Lazarus 'steps down' having performed the role magnificently for some ten years. Gary has offered to 'show the ropes' to whom so ever will take up the challenge and become our next magazine Editor. The importance of the role of Editor and the magazine is such that it really binds the area groups together and without an Editor and thus the magazine the club will probably fragment and ultimately fail.

Will someone, please, step forward and take on this role.

I would like to draw all members attention to problems that have been found with suspension wishbones. Some months ago I obtained a 'reconditioned' wishbone from a well known supplier. The stub-axle end of

the wishbone was incorrectly formed so that the cork seals that fit on the trunnion pin either side of the kin-pin did not / could not seal / would not seal the gap against dirt ingress



Then a Kent member bought a new wishbone from another supplier in this instant I encouraged return of the item as the metalwork of that wishbone was not correctly formed. At the recent MG & Triumph Spares Day Ian Cooke showed me his latest acquisition a wishbone



where the trunnion pin bearings had been welded into position not brazed. This will mean that when reconditioning is required in future it may not be easy nor economic to restore. More importantly the bearings were not square to the wishbone causing the kingpin once fitted to list at one or two degrees instead of upright.

With the demise of business making wishbones by Barry King where can decent wishbones be obtained?

I am at present trying to find a source of trunnions and bearings in a kit that owners can fit or have fitted to their worn wishbones.

Alan Anstead

Kent Area Rep' & Area Rep's Representative
to National Committee.
enquiries@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk

Fifty Years and Counting

On 1st March 1967 a 1960 Frogeye Sprite 6324 HX chassis no AN5 38541 was destined to be associated with the Devenish family. My Grandfather George, who I never met, asked my Father, Martin what he would like for a 21st birthday present. The choices being a gold watch, a party or £100 towards a new car.

Money towards a new car was Dad's choice and on 3rd March a visit to Sportsgrid Ltd in London Road, Norbury resulted in the car being purchased for the grand sum of £259. The birthday present of £100 was used as a deposit together with an old 'sit up and beg' Ford Popular sold for £30. The remaining balance being paid off on HP over two years.



When Dad drove the car away he felt that he was quite lively for a car with a 948cc block and the then standard 1 1/8th inch SU carbs, however the redundant supercharger pulley on the crankshaft together with the banana manifold and raucous exhaust should have been should have been a pointer to previous work to increase performance.

Approx. 3 years later the engine was stripped down for a de-coke and new bearings and it was then discovered that oversized pistons had been previously fitted. These were apparently from a Hillman Imp and Dad was told that the cc would have increased to approximately 1220. Furthermore the cylinder head was a modified Austin 1100 variety.

When putting it back together, Twin 1 1/2 inch SU's were fitted. Although, the ram pipes fouled the steel bonnet, necessitating a small bulge in the bonnet aided by an upturned boot polish tin.

The car was used as everyday transport and was not garaged for a further 5 years. In 1972 the car was re-sprayed Pippin red from the original Cherry red and Dad, whilst appreciating that cherry was a traditional

colour, felt that the brighter colour suited the car. Others will no doubt have different opinions.

In 1974 Dad moved to Kent and for the first time in its life the Frogeye had a garage. At the same time it became a second vehicle. Bits of string tied around the interior door handle and dropped out of the bottom of the door were no longer necessary to gain access on frosty mornings. From this time the car was used sparingly (a genuine 98,000 miles remains on the speedometer).

Dad gave the car to me for enjoyment and also as an investment on my 21st birthday in July 2005. It was agreed that he would continue to look after it and carry out routine maintenance until I got my own garage. 10 years ago at about 92,000, the original cylinder block developed a hole in the side wall and due to previous extensive re-boring work was unfit for re-sleeving, so a refurbished 948 block was then fitted.



Last year the 1 1/2 inch SU's gave up the ghost and Dad replaced these with a pair of 1 1/4 SU's that he had taken from a friends crashed MG Midget 40 years previously. The original jets and needles still worked fine, as do the Goodyear G800 tyres fitted over 30 years ago, that pass inspection every year with no signs of deterioration. A long overdue Kenlow fan was also fitted.

I have been thinking of a restoration and at some time in the future, I might have the car re-sprayed again and possibly fit a Sebring bonnet. Although, Dad thinks that there is no suitable replacement for a healthy steel Frogeye bonnet.

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder!

George Devenish Kent

Wiggle – the story so far...



On arrival

Two years ago, things had to change. I'd always had a Series land rover, but due to Annette's spinal surgery and chronic pain, it had to go. We needed a (slightly more forgiving) replacement classic.

As a teenager working in the bodyshop of an Austin Distributor, I wanted (and couldn't afford) a Healey Sprite. Back then, this heady mix of sports car come babe magnet was intoxicating, but out of the question. So, 40 odd years later, the search began.

My criteria was narrow. Had to be a Sprite and not Midget (Link with the past and to my mind scarcer) Had to be Old English White (always was). Maybe Mineral Blue. Had to be original (I don't do mods). So I find myself buying two and a van full of spares blind off some auction site. Deal done, the bloke would deliver both to my home in South Manchester from the Isle of Sheppy in Kent. Note- don't do this at home. Luckily



Progress. Good gaps and body started

all went well and they duly arrived. The one I wanted went into the workshop and the other, which was dead scrap, left outside. This was broken for parts.

WLG 909E had entered our lives.

The Cheshire registration number was pleasing, Wiggle (a play on WLG) had come home after 35 years off the road. Now for the big surprise. My mother, nearing 90, took one look at it and said 'That was mine new'!!!! 'It was Green'. I was committed then, as she wants a drive when it's finished! What a coincidence!

It's coming along slowly. I anticipated a fight with the DVLA, as the chassis number was wrong on the log book (HAW 9) and it was an Austin Sprite. I wrote explaining and enclosing the Heritage certificate, and they amended without question by return (Phew!). Although it's still an Austin, but its model is a Healey Sprite. I decided not to push it and gave up whilst I was ahead! A purchase of parts off the bay of e led me to meet a chap who suggested I join MASC North West. I've never been the cozy clubs type, but glad we did. Meetings are friendly and sociable, and the ladies meet too, which Annette enjoys. I've had a lull, but got my enthusiasm back and going for it again!

Anyway, that's all for now, hopefully will update you further!

Chris Ennis and Annette Barnes,
North West Region.



Sorting scuttle shape and windscreen fit



Annette learning the black art.....

MG Midget GT



An “Ex Works” Swedish Race Car

Part 2. The Race is Still On

Continuing the history of a unique MG Midget built by the Racing Department at BMC Sweden

1964

One of the BMC mechanics, Kjell Andersson, part of the team preparing and maintaining the car in 1962-63, offered to buy it and race it. He did so together with another colleague, Paolo Zazzi.

They fitted a tuned 948 cc engine and participated in a numerous races both in the Swedish championship and the Sports car series.



In September Paolo Zazzi participated in an international race at Ring Knutstorp, the result is unknown.

In October he SSF-raced at Skarpnäck and ended on a 6th place.

Additionally it was raced earlier that year by another professional BMC driver, Jan-Eric Andreasson, on ice during one of the winter SM-races on Lake Haresjon. Result, 3rd place.

Autumn this year the car was sold to one of Kjell's colleagues at BMC Sweden: Reine Wisell

Reine's results in the 5 races included in the tarmac SM:

Ring Knutstorp, April	Dnf
Skarpnäck, May	2nd
Gelleråsen, May	Dnf
Skarpnäck, September	5th
Gelleråsen, October	5th

It's notable that he set a lap record during the race at Ring Knutstorp in April and it took some years before it was broken.

A rising star takes the wheel!

Reine Wisell was really determined to further improve the car and added some new features to increase both road holding and durability.

The rear leaf springs and lever dampers were taken out and replaced by coil over telescopic dampers (Triumph Herald) and adjustable lower bars.

Ventilation was improved in the coupe by bigger openings in the rear.

Disc brakes were increased in diameter and an improved gearbox was fitted.

1965



During the 1965 season Reine Wisell participated in a total of 10 races. A mix of national and international races on tarmac and ice. In Sweden and Denmark.

He ended in 7th place in the Swedish championship against drivers like Harry "Sputnik" Kallstrom in Cooper-Mini, Leif Englund in Lotus Elite, Picko Troberg in Cooper-Mini, Arne Berg in R8 Gordini, Kay Honkanen in Lotus Elite and many more.....

Here Reine is seen at one of the two international races 1965. It's at Roskilde Ring



in Denmark with a wonderful variety of cars in its class.

Exactly 50 years later, Reine was back in the cockpit at Mantorp Park in 2015

1966

According to the Swedish car registration authorities:

1st July, Stefan Wickström, Motala, new reg. no. EA 2644

Christer Claesson, Motala recalls today:

"My father who was both racing and rallying during the 60s very often camped with the famous "Team Balzar" in which Reine Wisell was a member. There was also a guy named Ulf Karlsson whose main job was to collect drive shafts from local scrap yards before the races.

I remember the Midget very well and still cannot forget the moments when I was allowed to sit in it in the garage.

I also remember when Stefan Wickstrom bought the car, re-registered it and used it on normal roads. On one occasion my father borrowed the car from Stefan and I was taken for a ride which still remains in my memory as something epic. It is still giving me the shivers remembering the sound, vibrations and absolutely no heating system. I was forced to act as defroster for my dad cleaning the screen constantly with a cloth".

As an interesting detail, I have been trying to buy the original wooden steering wheel shown in the rebuilding pictures from 1962

A couple of years ago I managed. I have it now as a nice piece of history on the wall."

1967

According to Swedish car registration authorities:

16th November, Philipssons, Motala

**20th November, Lindströms bil,
Falköping, new reg. no. R 46374**

**4th December, Sören Wetterström,
Jönköping, new reg. no. F 79284**

**5th December, Leif Rosenkvist,
Jönköping**

A New Owner Hurt Axell

A new racing era is on the rise again.

During the spring of 1967 Kurt Axell from Bankeryd bought the car and was determined to bring it to the racetracks again and join the Swedish Sports Car championship.

The car and the engine went through a thorough renovation.

Kurt managed to participate in one race this year. At Dalslands Ring he was quite successful against cars like Lotus 47 but the engine didn't last until finish.



Kurt got the Midget in quite a bad condition. The car had already now been through many hands and been used on normal roads without any special care.

When Kurt got the car home he started to immediately take it apart and after thoroughly checking and replacing any bad parts, he carefully put it back together. It was now in much better condition.

There was a terrible mix of steel and mag wheels. The good thing was that the mag wheels still survived and were in quite good condition. But...one of the wheels had a typical Swedish winter tyre with spikes mounted.



The summer of '68 was very warm and nice so the

1968

The first test run with everything back into position and the Formula Junior engine fully renovated was done on public roads at 4.00 am one Sunday morning. Since the car was not legally registered it was important not to be seen.

50 km away from home the gearbox broke. Kurt had to wait until people woke up and started to move along this little remote road to get lift back home to arrange for a pick-up.





most of the renovation was done in Kurt's garden.

Here Kurt is lining up for the first race in one of the SSF races at Dalslands Ring. He's waiting behind a very special Lotus 47 raced by "Mr Musak" or rather Kaj Bjerke which was his real name. This specific car was bought by a friend of mine 1972 who still owns it and races it occasionally. If I'm correctly informed there were only 80 made and this is the only one remaining in Scandinavia.

Full Racing

During the winter Kurt fitted a 1275cc engine with Cooper S head, Formula Junior camshaft, forged pistons, Weber 45 DCOE and got the unit fully balanced.

A number of Sports Car championships were raced during the year with good results. Best was a 1st place at Anderstorp Raceway against Ginetta G4, Lotus Europa and Austin Healey's.

Karlskoga Raceway 1969

A very special occasion at Mantorp Park. This is the weekend before the inauguration

of the track and this race was used to try out the start and timing system

Anderstorp Raceway. The only track in Sweden with F1 status





Still today Kurt and I have frequent contact and we meet regularly. Kurt is my biggest supporter and time after time he has surprised me by giving back irreplaceable parts from the Midget that he's kept in his garage since the time he was active.

On the left I get the MG badge that is seen in the grill in all pictures above.

To the right I receive the original leather steering wheel that Reine Wisell mounted



in the car 1965. Also one of the fantastic original Cooper mag wheels. Including a very mature Dunlop Racing tyre from 1969...

In Part 3 next we'll here about the car's restoration and present day adventures

Per Roxlin
Sweden

www.mgmidgetgt.se
per.roxlin@tetrapak.com

Rosemary Willis

It's my sad duty to let you know that Jim Willis has been in touch to announce the passing of his wife Rosemary Willis, who died peacefully at home on the morning of Friday 24th February, following a short illness.

Although not well known to most members of the Midget and Sprite Club, Rosie's input toward the smooth running of the club cannot be underestimated, having kept the committee's spirits and energy levels high by supplying copious amounts of full English breakfasts at almost every committee meeting over the last five years or so. In fact Rosemary can quite rightly be regarded as the unofficial tenth member of the committee.

The committee on behalf of the membership of the Midget and Sprite Club would like to send Jim, Alex, Julian and their families our condolences and best wishes.



RH SPECIALIST INSURANCE: 'NOT JUST CLASSICS!'



By Emma Airey, Account Executive, RH Specialist Insurance

“Who’s your insurance with? RH? I thought they only did classic cars?”

Assuming that RH Specialist Insurance is a ‘classics-only’ insurance company is a natural mistake. They’re best known in that area, for sure, and the name – ‘RH Specialist Insurance’ – does suggest a degree of specialisation.

But RH's specialism isn't only in classic vehicles. It's in the depth of knowledge they have across all motoring genres. They cover literally anything with an engine. Not just classics, but motorcycles, kit cars, steam-powered cars, even Sherman tanks!

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Yorkshire Area update



Greetings from Yorkshire!

A few updates in this one. We had a good Meeting in Feb despite some pretty bleak weather, with nine members turning up for a decent lunch and a good chat. Great to see some new faces and some regulars too.

I've put together a membership Survey for the Yorkshire area. As we know, Yorkshire is a big place, and the meetings are currently held dead centre when taking into account member locations. If you're in or around the Yorkshire area, if you could take 10 mins to fill it in. I'd be very grateful, it's all about making the Meetings work for all members as much as possible. The survey link is www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/ZL8WT9S. Responses are sent to me and won't be shared with anyone else. If you've got any extra comments, or the survey doesn't work/you'd rather not fill it in, feel free to email me or grab me at one of our events.

Keep an eye out for the inaugural Yorkshire MASC Coast to Coast run, which is in June and can be found on the opposite page.

MASC have been invited to two MGCC runs: the Wolds Way Run and the Daffodil Run. Brief details are in here, if you'd like an entry form and haven't got an email from me about it let me know.

The Daffodil Run will be on Easter Sunday 16th April 2017 once again supporting Marie Curie Cancer Care.

The Wolds Way Run will be on the 14th of May 2017; this well established event is a full day scenic run of around 90 miles, and this year

it's anticipated that there will be excess of 100 cars. The Run is open to all MGs, Sports and Classic Cars.

Following the tulip-style route book (which includes information about the area), drive through the beautiful Yorkshire Wolds, starting and finishing in Hull, the 2017 UK City of Culture. For the start, there is prominent and specially reserved parking around the Rose Bowl fountain, Queen's Gardens (in the heart of the city centre next to the BBC Studios); at the finish, by the Victoria Pier in the historic Old Town, overlooking the River Humber.

You have the option to dine at the well regarded Cerutti's at the end of the run. The restaurant specialises in seafood and is opposite the Victoria Pier, and is opening especially for the entrants on the Wolds Way Run.

Entry fees for the Run are: MGCC members £15; non-members £20. Entry forms are available from www.mgccyorkshire.co.uk; entries are required by the 22nd of April.

A donation from the proceeds will be made to the Yorkshire Air Ambulance and a raffle will be held in aid of Max Appeal.

The next North Yorkshire meeting will be on March the 4th – fingers crossed for some warmth (though I've now fixed my heater!)

A final note to say that we are looking at changing the Sunday morning meet to an evening mid-week meet, probably around the Tadcaster area on a Thursday.

Hope to see you at something soon!

Rob

Yorkshire Two Day Event



Saturday 10 June

Starting in Robin Hood's Bay 9:00 First day 145 miles 5 hours

Some of the places we'll be driving through

ROESDALE ABBEY industrial history belies its stunning natural beauty - once a thriving home to 5,000 miners at its peak,

HEMSLEY If you were asked to imagine the perfect English market town, then it'd probably look a lot like this one

MASHAM Located in the breathtakingly beautiful region of Lower Wensleydale, is famous for its family-run breweries

REETH in Swaledale and Arkengarthdale two of North Yorkshire's finest dales meet

ORTON described by Wainwright as a place of tranquil beauty and unpretentious appeal

ASKHAM one of the most attractive villages in the former county of Westmorland

Overnight stop



Second Day – 50 miles – 2:30 hours

Bank's of Ullswater, up over Kirkston Pass

Ambleside one of the jewels of the Lakes

Langdale breathtakingly beautiful valley

Wrynose Pass first of 2 pass in Eskdale

Hardknott Pass Most dangerous of all the Lake's Pass's descending you pass the remains of the Roman fort founded under Hadrian's rule in the 2nd century

Finish in Saint Bees

Email me for Accommodation details austerfield.07@btinternet.com



In good company at the Corner House in Heskin

Unfortunately due to the pressure of work, I have missed a month or two of filling in a report, happily though I have made our February contribution a **PRIORITY!**

December 11th we had our club Christmas Lunch at Worsley Old Hall, a wonderful old Tudor Building, where often various car clubs meet for the start of their club runs. We all had a great time there, and we were very



impressed with the quality and presentation of the food. Eighteen of our members came to celebrate our Christmas club lunch.

On New Year's day we had about 10 members arrive at 10-30am for the cars and coffee meeting at the Corner House in Heskin where approximately 90 classics & vintage cars turned up on what was a dry, but very cold day where we had to brave the temperatures to view the amazing array of cars & chat to their owners.

The second Wednesday in January was our first club meeting of 2017, in which we enjoyed a really good time going through our list of events for the year. It's already looking a very busy season with the clubs first run out being our traditional Valentine's Day run, this is always the Sunday nearest to the 14th February, so it will be on the 12th of February this year. We started from the Yarrow Valley Country Park with nine cars turning up on what was a very cold but dry day, well done Chaps and Chap'esses! After meeting up and having a nice cup of coffee, tea etc., Each lady was given a Red Rose, they were all delighted and hoped that they would receive more of these on the 14th (so don't disappoint them fellas!)



We set off on quite a short run of 27 miles along some lovely country lanes around Wigan, Aspull and Coppull and finishing up in a country pub, the White Crow in Worthington for lunch. Shelley had a little present of a shell trinket box brought back from her holls in Dorset for each lady and also a very large cake which she had made earlier. Well at least we men could share in that! We started to leave the pub about 4pm having had a

Area Report

very nice lunch, allowing us time to get home before the night closed in so we can get our baby Spridgets etc to bed. Having said that, some of us were in MX5s, MGF a Merc, and a beautiful Blue Enigma!



Over the winter nights I have refitted the engine in my Frogeye after another mega re-build, this time with the help of a team of experts from within the North West club members. All should be well this time!! In the pursuit of working on your own you have to find ways of solving any problems, and on many occasions another pair of hands would have come in very handy! Fitting the prop shaft was just one of those jobs! I had read about using a piece of plastic guttering, and as I looked around my garage. A strong 4 feet long by 3½ inch cardboard tube, looked like a very good option.



With a cutting disc I removed a quarter section, the prop now fit very snug inside and held the union to the gearbox very straight, so with the two inserted in the tunnel and the cardboard being a good length gave me some leverage to line the prop up and with a little push and twist it mated with the gearbox, job done hurrah!! From now on I will be keeping the tube in my tool rack. I never throw anything away just as well this time. By the way the tube came from Moss, when I bought some chrome trim for my MGB sometime ago.

Talking of chrome, I have just picked up my overrider's for the Frog, having just had them re-chromed, how expensive is that now! I still have quite a bit of work to do on Mandy to get her ready for this year, and get some miles under her bonnet to run her engine in before we go to Germany in June, which I have to say Shelley and I are very much looking forward to, now where is that Phrasebook !!!

Report by **Neil and Shelley**
North West Area Reps





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East Anglian MASC Report

Not much Spridgiting went on in these parts through February however I did manage to get to the FBI meeting (unlike January) even though, incredibly it started to sleet as I set out and the following day it actually snowed.

It was not a night for a Sprite but we did get a good turnout of club stalwarts, so a pleasant evening was passed checking diary dates and discussing such topics as Kimbolton classic (9th July), Earsham Hall car rally (30th April, Google Bungay area Lions club classic vehicle rally and download an entry form or phone 07599 935 113), Higham Ferrers classic car show 6/8/2017, fitting rear brake cylinder clips, immigration and UK planning rules (if only the government had been present to pick up some pointers).

One interesting (to me anyway) point that came out in the general conversation was that Peter knew the lady who previously owned editor Gary's new Frogeye, and had advised her regarding selling it (small world).

The good news is that it is now early March, the worst of the bad season weather is behind us. The nights are pulling out so we will all soon be pulling out of our drives in proper cars.

I was flicking through the TV channels in that rarely visited area south of channel 200, late one evening. I happened on an old film (Night of the big heat), and would have continued to flick (not the best film in the world), if it hadn't been for the newish (then) white MKIII Sprite (GUV 465C) that was featured throughout the film, and used to convey the hero (3 up) to the fight with the alien invaders.

The film was set on the fictional Scottish island of Fara, but was actually filmed around Portland Bill for the radar station and the Lighthouse and the Swan Inn where the main characters lived, is actually in Milton Keynes which when the film was shot in 1967 would still have been a village.

Despite the development of the new town (now celebrating its fiftieth anniversary) this 13th century Inn is still there and very much in business (good excuse for a trip out in the Sprite and a nice lunch).

I suspect this was a low budget film despite a cast including Peter Cushing, Christopher Lee, Patrick Allen and Sara Lawson, as there were only a handful of other supporting actors, and the location costs could hardly have amounted to much.

Apart from the white Sprite (which was used by the leading lady and our hero throughout the film), the other vehicles driven by the cast were Peter Cushing's Triumph renowned (I think), Patrick Allen's early Land Rover, another Land Rover, an unfortunate beat up old (1951) Ford Consul (which met its end with the owner inside it) and the garage mechanic's Ford Thames 10 cwt van.

See you all at the oldest Inn in England and far beyond.



Dave Dixon

(AKA Red and sometimes blue Leader) e-dave@hotmail.co.uk



MASC Kent Area Report

Real life events depicted in the cartoon below

"Kent, Sir - everybody knows Kent - Apples, cherries, hops, and women."

Pickwick Papers by Charles Dickens.

The East Kent meet at Sarre was put back a week, to 15th January 2017, so that it did not clash with the London Bridges Run on 8th January 2017.

In the end no one from the East Kent group went on the London Bridges Run.

Foul weather probably caused some to miss the re-scheduled meeting but eight of us enjoyed the venue, food, and company. Because of the weather no one came in a Spridget.

The fourth Sunday of the month and it was time for the main Kent MASC monthly meet. Who would have thought that with cars still covered in overnight frost and roads heavily salted that six Spridgets - four MG Midget 1500's, a Frogeye, and an Austin Sprite would be out for the meeting. I chose a slightly more modern vehicle even seeing a pale green Sunbeam Alpine on route.

We were able to welcome new member Patrick Noble with his MG Midget 1500 with a round of applause. Patrick is keen to convert his car to overdrive and unknowingly sat next to the best person for advice on the subject, Steve Smith. Steve is a great fan of the overdrive conversion and has helped another member in the past having converted his own car some time ago. Such is the talent within our group that if Patrick decides to remove the rubber bumpers we can direct him to someone who has done an excellent job with that.

Dave Chalk, our resident designer and cartoonist, had done a couple of cartoons, in frames, to be presented to Ron Edwards and Vic Barker. Dave could not make it to the meeting so I did the honours.

The cartoon was of Ron & Vic on the 2016 Miglia Tour. Last year's tour showcased great team spirit. The award really was for true grit and perseverance in the face of adversity. Vic and Ron shared Vic's Midget 1275 for the tour. The car's engine had been built / reconditioned by an engine firm, with too high a compression ratio that caused pre-ignition and overheating. A.C. Dodd was consulted and a different camshaft was installed to try to remedy the problem but alas, when the cars started to climb the Alps Maritime, Col de Grenier, and the mountains around Mont Ventoux the pre-ignition and overheating became a problem. First the luggage was transferred to another car to lighten the load but then the radiator grill had to come off, then the horns obstructing airflow, next the spot-lamps. Nothing seemed to work. Not only did the two carry on with



a car slowly being de constructed but Vic, uncomplaining was moving every way but which in his seat to try to combat a painful back problem. The route had to be re-drawn to avoid some mountains. I am glad to say that un-daunted the boys are back for this year's Alpine Miglia (1-11 September 2017).

A late presentation was to Darren Tyre who, with absent Tracey, had won two prizes, for the raffle, at the Christmas Meal. A pocket sized tool and a bottle of wine. Who will get which? Darren said that he had given up alcohol after a heavy session last night. Does that mean it goes to Tracey? The pocket tool was metric. Will it be any use after Brexit? Darren also showed pictures of his E-type Jaguar build. Impressive!

Mike Pearson brought a welding jig that I am making having kindly milled a slot through it. Such is the demand for the clutch release bearings that I have made for members that I have had to have parts CNC machined in bulk and am making a jig to speed / aid assembly.

It was good to see Peter Gardiner whose work keeps him from many meetings in fact the last time Peter attended a meeting

was January 2016. Peter was another who brought his Midget.

Poor Graeme Williams is getting into trouble at home because of my mentioning his M.G. bobble hat. He drives a Frogeye. Is there a lady member who would be willing to knit or crochet a bobble hat, for Graeme, with either an Austin-Healey or Frogeye logo thereon? He can maintain calm at home by wearing his MG hat when driving his MGA.

Ralph kindly presented me with an Airfix construction kit of a Frogeye. The kit is like a fine vintage wine in that its value is in the virgin kit so I dare not assemble it.

Can I draw member's attention to the fact that 'Ahead-4-Healey', who advertise in Mascot offer members a 7.5% Discount on parts. You will have to state your Midget & Sprite Club Membership Number for checking against Membership details.

Alan Anstead

Kent Rep & Reps Rep on National Committee
enquiries@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk
Attention All

If Only

This is Part 2 of a series of photos featured in *Mascot*. Once again the title is simply "If Only". Here we see Left Hand Drive BMC models awaiting export. Big Healeys, Morris Minor convertibles and of course, Mk1 Sprites. The warehouseman is either checking the inventory or reading his horoscope, while his friend on the forklift moves some spare parts. Never mind the wonderful cars in sight, most of us these days, would simply be delighted to get our hands on those quality spare parts. If Only!



Scotland Area Report



Douglas Anderson's Midget awaits the start of the Monte Carlo Rally Historique

It's January, it's cold, it's dark, and it's the Monte Carlo Rally Historique start in Paisley.

Once again Paisley hosted the only British start of "Historique" for the fourth year in a row.

I had e-mailed the Scottish members in advance and met up with Dennis and Lindsay, who had travelled through from the east of the country. We were especially interested in the 1500 Midget of Douglas Anderson, who, along with being the coordinator of the UK leg, was also going all the way to Mediterranean resort this year.

We waited by the car in the paddock area until he turned up and had an interesting



The Austin 7 Ulster

chat with him, although he wouldn't open the bonnet for us to have a wee peek. All three of us were left wondering what lurked underneath.

For those readers who know of my love of Austin 7's it will come as no surprise to hear I was salivating over the Austin 7 Ulster. Eventually after watching a few cars leaving the start ramp, we retired to a local hostelry for a beer and a chat about all things spridgetly before heading home.

I have long been a bit jealous of other areas outings, etc., so this year I hope we can organize a number of local trips plus a number of events which we can attend as a club. We have a few ideas and hope to formulate a list shortly.

On the restoration side of things, David discovered, on stripping his 1275 engine on his Frogeye rebuild, that it was fitted with the highly desirable EN40B crankshaft. He is currently on the look out for a spare 1275 block. I think Peter is still having a debate with himself over the fitting of a Shorrocks supercharger to his Frogeye restoration. Both are in the final stages, so we should see the results of their efforts soon.

As for myself, I have been engaged in re-skinning the driver's door on the non-Frog and I need to thank David Richardson, a member of the club down in deepest Gloucestershire, for his valuable tips and advice. I knew he was also re-skinning his Frogeye doors so I turned to him for some advice. It also reminded me that I will need to visit his brother Douglas to pick up some parts which he has been kind enough to keep for me for far too long.

I also enjoyed Steve Brooks recent article on his book collection, as along with many others I have quite a number of Austin Healey and Midget books and also enjoyed John Baggott's book, which is a good read and source of reference.

Finally I noticed in this month's edition of *Mascot* that John mentioned in his letter, that the DVLA did have a service of listing previous owners. I was unaware of this so I will make enquiries, as I would like to know more about the Austin Sprite.

Graham

Heart of England Stuff



Smug in Lynmouth

Lively meeting

When I arrived at the Green Dragon for the February meeting, I noticed a Midget in the car park that I didn't recognise. Moreover, sitting at the wheel of said Midget was a chap that I didn't recognise either, so I said hi, asked him to join us in the pub, and furnished him with a pint.

A few days earlier I had noticed a regular contributor to the BBS forum, hailing from Gloucestershire, asking about H of E MASC group, threatening to have a drive in his Midget to see what they get up to. Obviously I chipped in on the Forum and said that we are a friendly bunch, if slightly mad, and thought no more of it.

So back in the Green Dragon, I was chatting about the fact that we'd had a couple of new people join the club in our area of late (and assumed that our new arrival was one of them) and by the way, had anybody noticed that on the BBS forum, Malcolm le Chevalier had been asking about us and thinking of driving all the way up from Gloucestershire to suburban Redditch. "Er, yes that's me" came a polite but informative voice from the throng!

It gladdened my heart that someone would undertake a two and a half hour round trip on spec, to meet up with a load of strangers in a Redditch pub on the off chance that we might be planning to do something interesting! This is the calibre of chap we need, I thought and immediately set membership sec Stuart on him to extract a membership fee! Welcome on board Malcolm!

March activity

As it happened, we were indeed talking about doing something interesting! One of our March activities will be an action packed Karting and Curry night at the Full Throttle Raceway, Stourbridge; these events are good fun, if contentious as the lady drivers weigh a lot less than male drivers and are often in Pole position! The Duke William Pub / Micro Brewery will serve as a watering hole to break our journey of 150 yards walk after racing, to select a suitable purveyor of Indian Cuisine in Lower High St Stourbridge. A quick Spridget Convoy round Stourbridge Ring Road will no doubt give a final flourish to proceedings before we depart in various directions.

Smug!

Back in December, my wife Ange turned sixty and it was decided that we would have a weekend away together with daughter Jen and her fiancé Mark. The destination was a Boutique Harbour side Hotel in Lynmouth, North Devon and I immediately saw a Midget opportunity. We could go along the coast road and tackle via Porlock Hill. Sorted! Everything was fine until Jen asked which car the four of us should travel in, to be told that they should go separately in their BMW Z4 as we we're going in the Midge. I then received an ear bashing, pointing out that travelling that distance in my 51 year old car was jeopardising the whole week end and how could I be so stupid as it would no doubt break down. Anyway, Spridget resolve prevailed and we set off in a Southerly direction on the M5 with the BMW racing ahead. Imagine my wry smile, when about 40 minutes later we received a phone call from the advance party to report that the Z4 had developed a problem and had struggled to Michaelwood Services in Limp mode and could we slow the Midge down a bit so they could catch up! Needless to say, trusty DVJ performed faultlessly, transporting us to and from Lynmouth, taking Porlock Hill in its stride twice over, while the Z4 limped along behind. I was as Smug as a Smug bloke from Smugtown and Ange had a great birthday!

Please note pic of visibly smug Midget gazing wistfully out over the Bristol Channel.

Smug Steve

Essex Area Report



On the London Bridges run. Not all the cars were red!

The first meeting of the New Year included the usual programme planning for the upcoming season. After a bit of arm twisting by Area Rep Gary, the following calendar and organiser was agreed for the first half of the year:

- Sunday 23rd April – Drive it Day run.....
Doug & Jenny
- Saturday 6th May – Ramp Day **Francis**
- Sunday 21st May **Gary & Diane**
- Tuesday 6th June – Mid week run/dinner.....
Tim & Linda
- Sunday 25th June..... **Owen & Lucy**
- Tuesday 4th July – Mid week run/dinner
Paul & Helen
- Sunday 23rd July **Tony**

I have cheated a bit by suggesting we join an organised event for the run on Drive it Day so saving me reccing a route, finding a coffee stop venue and producing the detailed route instructions. The event we are joining has a maximum entry of 300 cars so there will be plenty of automotive eye candy to admire.

A group of members also attended the London Bridges Run organised as usual by Darren Tyre. From the rendezvous point near Chelmsford, Paul & Helen in their Midget led a convoy comprising of Diane & Gary and Tim & Linda in their Frogeyes together with Jenny & me guesting in our MG1300 to the

start at McD's in Rotherhithe to join Owen & Lucy who had driven there directly.

Around 15 cars in total joined the run led by Darren & Tracy in their 200 bhp Zetec powered and six speed sequential gearboxed Frog. Gary L was driving Gapless, his latest acquisition complete with V8 badge on the rear!

As it says on the tin, the route traversed all the road bridges between Tower Bridge in the east and, after 30 miles, Richmond Bridge in the west. A new section avoiding Aldgate and a loop near Waterloo Bridge added new interest from the previous times I had taken part.

Our only casualty of the day was Owen & Lucy whose Sprite lost its exhaust system near the Monument and, after a temporary repair, they headed for home. As a result, they are currently strong contenders for the Breakdown Trophy.

After a comfort break at Wandsworth, our group completed the second part of the route to arrive at The Rose of York in Richmond for a generous carvery lunch. Several commented on the seemingly increased number of traffic lights and the hope nobody was caught out by the frequent speed limit changes.

The return trip started with a lap of Richmond Park which allowed us to enjoy both Red and Fallow deer as well as Ring Necked Parakeets. The group gradually split up due to the traffic levels but everyone arrived home safely.

This amusing sign was recently noted on a social media website. A subsequent search on Google revealed numerous similar signs



Doug Plumb

From The Bowels of Bristol

Yes, it has been quite some time since the Bowels of Bristol have submitted a report to *Mascot*. Nothing new in that of course, we have had many a blank moment in the past. Usually, this has been due to the fact that I simply couldn't be bothered, or, the branch members have all been very dull and boring and very un-news worthy. However, this latest news blackout is different; it was part of a strategic study, the result of which I can now reveal.

In the past, our lack of reportage in *Mascot* has resulted in an increase of members coming along to meetings. It seemed, the longer the period of silence, the more that turn up each month – interesting that.

Now it has been suggested that when we have submitted a report, certain members take umbrage and stay away – sulking. Some see my reports as an attack on the vulnerable, the helpless, the useless and the clueless Spridgeteers amongst our group.

No doubt these members feel safer to keep quiet, say nothing and just let me think they are hapless rather than open their mouths and prove that I am right! Hence, they stay safely at home on club nights until such time that things go quiet.

Then, just like a frightened little furry creature hiding down a hole, they eventually pop their heads up to see if the danger has passed. I have to say, the look on some people's faces when they re-visit the Wishing Well on the second Wednesday of the month, to see that I am still there with notepad in hand, just makes my evening!

Anyway, the strategic study has produced a wavering graph of attendance against periods of non-reportage. The longer the period of silence, the higher number of furry creatures, point proven. The extended non-reportage period over the study period has produced an outstanding increase number of members attending. An important fact which I think other Area Representatives could learn from. Less reports = more members, it really works for the Bowels of Bristol.



Some of the Bristol Area's frightened little furry creatures take revenge on their Area Rep

Having come to that conclusion however, all branches have a contractual obligation to submit a report to *Mascot* from time to time. Hence, I am obliged to continue my periodic attacks upon the vulnerable, the helpless, the useless and the clueless, nothing personal of course, but rules are rules, regardless the effect this has on numbers, or furry creatures down holes.

I am looking forward to a very quiet evening at our next meeting at the Wishing Well, unless of course the vulnerable, the helpless, the useless and the clueless all contrive to turn up to prove me wrong (they wouldn't dare would they?)

Terry Horler
(See all, hear all, report all)
rebelwithasprite@hotmail.com

Dorset Area

John's Jottings

Dorset Area MASC held its area's AGM on 5 February. Whilst the full Committee with partners were there, disappointingly no other members were present. Your Committee for the coming year is as last year but we are happy to co-opt additional members to join us if you want to volunteer your services.

The 'new' Committee has now met and put together a programme for Club nights and other events. A difficult decision was taken not to hold our annual 'Classics in the Park' event this year.

This is due to a combination of circumstances including finding an attractive site coupled with the fact that there are already nearly 80 events in the local classic car calendar. We had hopes of securing a site at Swanage but unfortunately they could only offer us a car park.

But with the 60th anniversary of the launch of the Sprite in May 1958 coming up next year we will be organising a special event for that and want to get it into the local calendar of events well in advance.

Club nights will continue to be on the 4th Monday of each month at the Worlds End. Events already fixed include the Club B-B-Q at Francis and Eves' home on 26 June, the evening PDQ (Pretty Damned Quick) road run on 21 August organised by last year's winners Peter and Dee Houghton and the Pride in Ownership competition on 24 July.

As a change we will also be inviting other local car clubs to join us on certain Club nights. Others running vehicles with the infamous A-series engine will be our initial target as they share so much with us – mainly leaking oil to the ground!

October will see a presentation night for charity with a quiz in November. We hope to fund raise at other events we attend and this, together with the proceeds of what has become 'Stephanie's raffle' each Club night, will provide us with funds to hand over.

Our December meeting will be early on 18 December and our annual festive dinner will

be on Friday 5 January 2018. So there is something for everyone we hope, but if you have any comments or indeed criticisms please do contact me. I want us to give members what they want but if you do not let the Committee know then we are shooting in the dark.



In last month's report I alluded to work having started to swap over the gearbox on my Frogeye. This all went quite well with help from Colin Archer and Peter Houghton, thanks guys, but then the horrors appeared.

Once it is all back together I'll be writing in full about what I found. The picture above shows the old flywheel (top) with a stock 948cc flywheel below. The one removed from my car was machined down to half its original weight which now explains why the car constantly stalled and tickover had to be set at 1100rpm!

Do not mention hydraulic leaks and lever arm damper leaks which were also discovered. So now it has turned into quite a big job. Has anyone out there reading this got a spare clutch lever fork for a smooth case gearbox – original part number 2A3406 – if so I'd be very pleased to hear from you.

Returning to the Sprite anniversary next year has anyone got thoughts on what we should do to mark this special event? Do we have a show at a special location, perhaps a road run ending up at a special location or maybe a run with a meal at the end of it.

Clear roads for 2017...

John Gully, Chairman DAMASC
MASC Area Representative
john.gully@btinternet.com

Central Area Report



Gary and Chris on roof removal duties

Noisy club nights

On club nights it is always an uplifting sight when you pull into the car park and there are a few of our little cars sitting in a pool of halogen security lighting. Sure sign warmer, brighter days are just around the corner as members start to venture out to meetings in their cars. Inside I was met by a good turnout of members. Central members can be a noisy lot at times and there are rare moments of silence. It is particularly evident at this time of the year when there are lots of ideas being bounced around for upcoming shows and events.

Main topics covered were Drive it Day, being sorted as I write by fellow area rep Ian Cooke, which we aim to support. An announcement from Bill Mohan that a Brum Tunnels run for 2017 is on the cards and is in the planning stage. I'll keep everyone posted once the date is set in stone. Talk of a BIG event in 2018 celebrating the 60th anniversary of the AH Sprite and how we can be involved.

An Aldon tuning day on a rolling road organized by Rich Weaver for October 14th. Places are limited to just ten and open to all MASC members so do let me know if you are interested so we can pencil you in.

The first club run out for my Midget in 2017 was the Stoneleigh MG Spares show. I'd agreed to meet Gary Hendon near Tamworth. When I pulled up I noticed he was talking to someone in a Ford Focus. Chris Doe from near Nottingham had decided to join us for the run over to Warwick. Chris is currently rebuilding his Midget and the engine is out whilst he is at the same time working on the

body shell. Good luck with that Chris, keep us posted with progress, nice of you to join us for the run over, we hope to see you again. Gary was soon in the true spirit of Midgeting as he folded down his hood ready for the trip over to Stoneleigh, enlisting Chris to help with the packing (see top image). Arriving at the show I spied an almost finished Sprite on the Hall's Garage stand. It was in fact the car belonging to Central members Anita and Greg Phillips. The car was catching lots of people's attention and looked very striking in its shiny new coat of paint. The car just needs the finishing touches before they can take to the wheel in the next few months. Other Central members Steve Roberts, John Collins and Rich Weaver were at the show making it very a social start to the year's events.



Anita Phillips poses with her nearly complete Frogeye at the Stoneleigh Show

I must add my vote of thanks to the volunteers on the MASC stand at the show who as always spent their free time giving advice on what seemed like a constantly full and packed stand. A special note of thanks must go to Keith Jukes who was displaying his Midget Betty on the stand. The car was making her first appearance on the podium so to speak. I hope your throat recovers after all that talking about your car Keith, maybe our next meeting won't be so noisy after all.....

Dave Warren Central MASC
central.masc@live.com

Market Place

Adverts to Alan Lo, 23 Charnell Road, Staple Hill, Bristol, BS16 5NE
email: alan@mobuzzing.net 07474 343 643

Wanted: Dry, secure storage space for a Midget for 12-18 months. I am looking for a place to leave a car until I return to the UK, not a storage place where I would require regular access for tinkering. **Contact Sean Crowley scrowley@adb.org.**

For Sale: Austin Healey Sprite Mark 3. 1275cc. 'D' Reg. available for spare parts. Off road for 30+ years and garaged for the last 20. Trailer required to collect from near Haywards Heath, Sussex. **Please contact Roy Pontifex by email Roy@Pontifexes.co.uk for further information.**

For Sale: A Pair of new Frogeye rear intermediate repair panels £285. Frogeye petrol gauge, professionally overhauled, ready to fit £65. Used hood frame, in good order to fit late 1275 and all 1500 Spridget's £50. Pair new Moss sun visors £35, package been opened (list price £45). I am having a clear out of left over parts, thanks for looking. **Contact: Dave Parker.0770 412 4864. sprite363@yahoo.co.uk**

For sale: 1960 Mk1 Austin Healey Sprite, Leaf Green. Total restoration. Original engine (rebuilt) and gearbox, wire wheels. Has rare Mk1 1960 Ashley GT Hardtop. **For information Telephone 0121 707 3766 – West Midlands**



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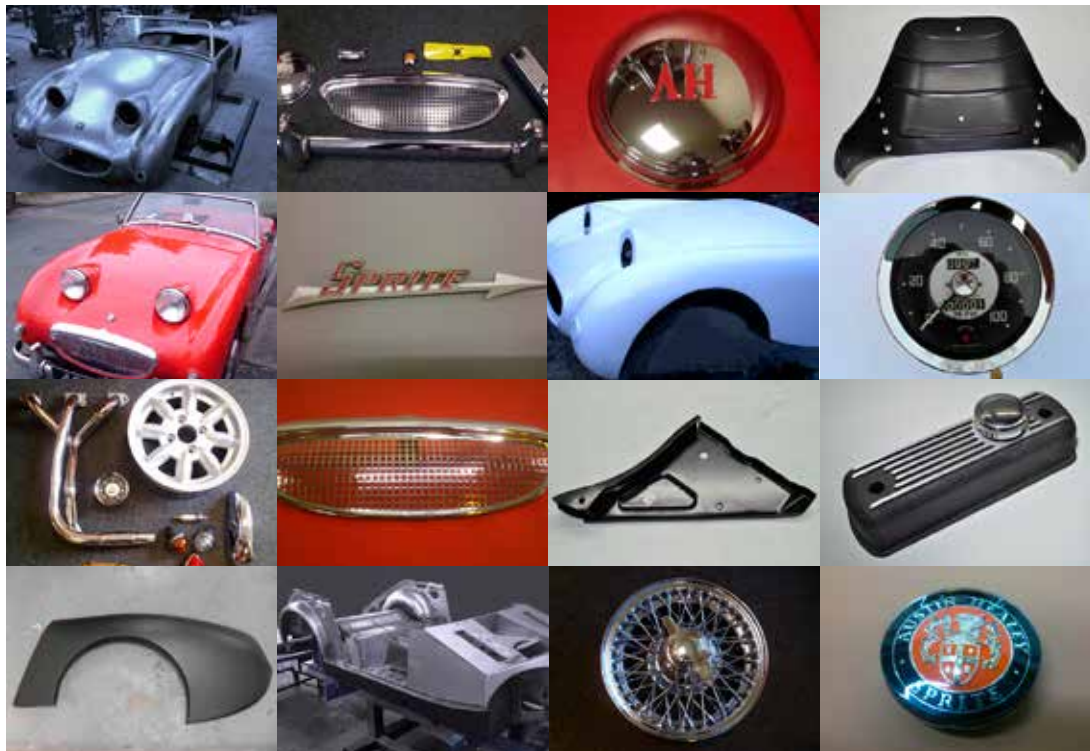
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